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ABSTRACT

This handbook is designed to help public school administrators to develop policies and procedures that allow for the appropriate educational placement of preschool children with disabilities in mainstreaming settings. Part I contains background information and materials on legal requirements related to mainstreaming, the efficacy of early childhood special education, and how to influence public policy. Part II provides information on the typical kinds of policies that are found to be barriers or to present disincentives to mainstreaming; summarizes attitudinal barriers hindering mainstreaming efforts; suggests a step-by-step process for systems change, using recommendations taken from effective school reform efforts; offers strategies for identifying policy barriers and options; provides a framework for changing policy barriers; and proposes strategies for applying newly developed policies to the process of making placement decisions for preschool age children with disabilities. Examples of actual policy documents that have been developed by states or localities to remedy mainstreaming disincentives are included. Appendixes contain legal resources; a list of resource people and resource agencies; background information on Chapter 1 programs for children who are educationally deprived; and sample state and local policies from Arizona, Jefferson County (Kentucky), Rhode Island, Massachusetts, Arizona, Minnesota, Vermont, New Mexico, and Wichita (Kansas). (Contains 25 references.) (JDD)

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